

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please amend the claims by canceling claims 1, 35, and 37-42 and amending claims 2-4, 10-13, 15, and 16 as indicated below, all without prejudice, as indicated on the following listing of all the claims in the present application after this Amendment:

1.(Cancelled)

2.(Currently Amended) The method of claim-~~1~~4, wherein said record is a complete specification of the set of linkings in terms of units of erase.

3.(Currently Amended) The method of claim-~~1~~4, wherein said set of linkings is formed according to a rule and the record consists of those linkings that are exceptions to the rule.

4.(Currently Amended) A The method of claim-~~1~~ operating a memory system including a controller and a non-volatile memory, further the method comprising:
establishing a set of metablock linkings, each comprised of a plurality of units of erase, by which the controller accesses the non-volatile memory;
storing a record of said metablock linkings in the non-volatile memory;
determining that a unit of erase in a first of said metablock linkings is defective;
updating the first metablock linking so that it no longer contains said defective unit of erase; and
storing a record of the updated linking in the non-volatile memory.

5.(Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said updating comprises replacing the defective unit of erase with another one of said units of erase.

6.(Original) The method of claim 5, wherein said another one of said units of erase is selected from a list of unlinked units of erase.

7.(Original) The method of claim 6, wherein said list of unlinked units of erase is maintained in the non-volatile memory.

8.(Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
subsequent to said replacing the defective unit of erase with another one of said units of erase, updating said list of unlinked units of erase.

9.(Original) The method of claim 5, wherein said another one of said units of erase is selected from a unit of erase formerly belonging to another linking.

10.(Currently Amended) A The method of claim 1 operating a memory system including a controller and a non-volatile memory, further the method comprising:

establishing a set of metablock linkings, each comprised of a plurality of units of erase, by which the controller accesses the non-volatile memory;

storing a record of said metablock linkings in the non-volatile memory;

maintaining a list of unlinked units of erase;

determining that one or more units of erase in a first of said metablock linkings is defective; and

adding the non-defective units of erase in the first metablock to the list of unlinked units of erase.

11.(Currently Amended) A The method of claim 1 operating a memory system including a controller and a non-volatile memory, further the method comprising:

establishing a set of metablock linkings, each comprised of a plurality of units of erase, by which the controller accesses the non-volatile memory;

storing a record of said metablock linkings in the non-volatile memory;

determining that a unit of erase in a first of said metablock linkings is defective;

determining whether an alternate unit of erase is available for the defective unit of erase; and

in response to determining that an alternate unit of erase is not available, removing the first metablock from the set of metablock linkings.

VIA EFS

Attorney Docket No.: SNDK.348US0

Application No.: 10/750,157

12.(Currently Amended) The method of claim-~~1~~ 4, wherein said non-volatile memory comprises a plurality of quasi-independent arrays and each of the plurality of units of erase in a given one of said metablock linkings are from a different one of said quasi-independent arrays.

13.(Currently Amended) The method of claim-~~1~~ 4, wherein said non-volatile memory comprises a plurality of quasi-independent arrays and the plurality of units of erase in a given one of said metablock linkings are comprised of pairs of units of erase from the same quasi-independent array, wherein each of the pairs are from a different one of said quasi-independent arrays

14.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein said quasi-independent arrays are on separate chips

15.(Currently Amended) The method of claim-~~1~~ 4, wherein said record of said metablock linkings is stored in a portion of the non-volatile memory other than those assigned for user

16.(Currently Amended) The method of claim-~~1~~ 4, wherein each of said units of erase is comprised of a plurality of sectors and each of the sectors includes a data area and an overhead area, and wherein the record information for those units of erase containing data is maintained in their overhead area.

17.(Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the record information for those units of erase without data is maintained in a portion of the non-volatile memory other than those assigned for user data.

18-43.(Cancelled)